



IOWA OUTDOORS

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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[Electronic photos available]

SPRING TURKEY SEASON JUST DAYS AHEAD --- PRESEASON SCOUTING CAN INCREASE HUNTER SUCCESS

By Lowell Washburn

Blood stirring and primitive, the distinctive staccato gobble of the eastern wild turkey is a sound like no other. For Iowa's 50,000-plus spring turkey hunting enthusiasts, the resonate predawn rattling is a summons that cannot be denied.

This year's four part, split hunting season is just around the corner. It's a good thing too. Most hunters have been pacing the floor for weeks now, wondering just what to expect from their upcoming days afield.

I'm plenty anxious myself. But regardless of what kind of success this spring's hunting may bring, I have to admit that I've already had a pretty good season. During the past several days I've been spending my free time exploring familiar timbers, testing calls, and matching wits with preseason gobblers. As always, the boisterous crack-of-dawn turkey shows have been nothing short of spectacular.

As always, I've had the preseason woodlands all to myself. It's really too bad that so many spring turkey enthusiasts are missing out on so much fun. I blame it on the pros.

For years now, turkey hunting professionals have been preaching that preseason calling is strictly taboo. Conducting such activities, they claim, will automatically result in educated birds, call shy toms, and dramatically reduced success when hunting seasons open for real. Often repeated and widely accepted, this time worn theory has been around since Iowa turkey seasons first began more than 30 years ago.

At the surface, the theory does sound logical. But in reality, the philosophy is pure bunk.

The idea that a gobbler who hears your call, comes looking, and then doesn't find a real hen will not respond to the same sound another day is just plain ridiculous. Wild turkeys are highly social, highly vocal, and extremely mobile. In the real woods, games of hide and seek play out on a near continual basis. When such scenarios do occur and toms don't actually see every hen they hear, those birds do not automatically become hermits. Think about it.

In reality, hunters have plenty of incentives for getting into the timber well in advance of legal hunting seasons. First of all, the early April mornings are crisp and invigorating. Better yet, predawn gobbling is as good as it gets. As daylight arrives and birds hit the ground, they rarely fail to provide dramatic displays that include in-your-face gobbling, nonstop strutting, and if you're extremely fortunate, a good old fashioned Gobbler Smack Down.

Spring rituals can get rough. Those who have enjoyed a ring side seat know that few wildlife dramas are more breath taking than when two or more, needle-spurred heavyweights vie for dominance.

Preseason forays also have a practical side. They give spring turkey enthusiasts unparalleled opportunities to look and listen as wild turkeys communicate and interact within a completely natural and undisturbed setting. If you really want to know what your calling is supposed to sound like, nothing tops the instruction of live hens. It's an education that can't be matched by magazines, tapes, or TV videos.

Preseason, on-the-ground scouting serves to acquaint hunters with the individual birds they'll be hunting later this spring. It also allows hunters to become familiar with every detail of the woodlands they'll be tromping. That sort of knowledge can only increase, not decrease, your probability of success.

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Why canoeists and kayakers go paddling in late fall, winter, or early spring may seem hard to understand for the uninitiated. But once adventurous people go out once, they are often hooked. Why?

COLD-WEATHER PADDLING CAN BE FUN, BUT USE PROPER SKILLS AND GEAR

By Nate Hooegeveen

Iowa's bluff-country rivers and lakes, typically covered in thick cloaks of vegetation, are laid bare for surprising vistas. Frozen ground is held in place and algae cannot bloom, so even muddy rivers can run clear as mountain streams. Bald eagles congregate at stretches of open water, offering inspiration to canoeists and kayakers. When cabin fever sets in, the draw of water can be tempting, even under frigid conditions.

Because of the allure, sometimes paddlers test the waters without proper preparation, skills, clothing, and gear. Cold weather affects different people differently, but a rule of thumb is that when the water temperature plus air temperature do not total more than 120, that hypothermia is a serious threat. Cold water (70 degrees or under) can also lead to hypothermia no matter what the air temperature is, if someone is in the water long enough.

Hypothermia is a condition that occurs when your core body temperature is lowered. Early phases can be mild and include grouchiness or disorientation, but those symptoms can quickly progress to life-threatening situations requiring emergency warm-up measures.

Prepare For a Swim

During Iowa's cold season, the water is always cold, even on an unseasonably warm day. The risk of capsizing is always present. Dress as if it will happen. At minimum, cold-season paddlers should wear wetsuits, which allows the body's warmth to insulate a thin layer of water next to the skin, underneath a windbreak layer. An increasing number of serious paddlers use newer and more expensive dry suits, which can keep you entirely dry inside in case of a swim. Wearing a life jacket is even more critical at this time of year as it can buy you time to get you rescued and add insulation. Make sure to have dry clothes (warm-when-wet fabric like wool or wicking synthetics are best) waiting for you either a dry bag or a sealed compartment. Raingear during a storm is also needed to keep you warm, even if you do not capsize.

Know When NOT To Go

It may sound obvious, but water turns to ice in the winter. If you want to paddle in the winter, you need to learn to watch for this transition. Drive over road bridges, and scan for ice or slush on the water. Ice or slush on rivers can accumulate into "jams" on certain bends and sweep paddlers below the ice. If the temperature drops throughout the day, the channel may even freeze in around you. If you do not feel confident the water will not be open for your *whole* trip, don't go. Also check for wind advisories – on large

bodies of water, such as reservoirs, the Mississippi River pools, or northern Iowa's natural lakes, large waves can develop surprisingly quickly.

Develop Self-rescue Skills

During the warm season, learning how to re-enter a canoe or kayak is important for anticipating cold-season fun. Be aware that if you venture too far from shore in a canoe, that re-entering cannot be easily done without the aid of a second canoe. Kayakers need to first learn how to get out of the kayak, which involves popping off a spray skirt and successfully pushing out while under water. Re-entering the kayak can involve an inexpensive piece of gear called a paddle float, or learning the series of steps that allow you to quickly roll the kayak upright. Skills can be learned informally from local or regional clubs. Several paddle shops and some county conservation boards offer classes.

The Buddy System

Finally, using the buddy system – always advisable – is especially critical during the cold season. You may venture to areas where professional rescuers may need more time to get to you than you have available to save your life. Getting someone into dry clothes as quickly as possible can often avert a dangerous situation. Bringing an emergency rescue blanket does not take much space, but can help enclose warmth in an emergency. Simply huddling your group together to share body warmth is also a life saving technique. Such simple steps require little study or training, although having someone trained in rescue skills can be a real asset.

Iowa's Cold-weather Hotspots (sidebar)

Upper Iowa River: Spring fed, the exceedingly scenic Upper Iowa often flows ice-free sooner than other rivers at the same latitude.

Maquoketa River: Vegetated cliffs and canyons appear more austere and dramatic at this time of the year.

Downstream of large reservoirs: Areas below Red Rock, Saylorville, and Coralville have become popular winter paddling spots, as water released is somewhat warmer and sections remain ice-free for more of the season.

Lake Red Rock: Lake Red Rock has become a magnet for sea kayakers who love challenges and want to train for coastal experiences while paddling along sheer sandstone bluffs and rugged beaches. Cold-season paddling in wind and large waves can approximate what a kayaker might encounter on a trip to Lake Superior or the Pacific Northwest.

Southeast Iowa streams: The growing season is longer here, and the ice season is shorter. The Skunk River, Des Moines River, and Big Cedar Creek can often be paddled earlier or later in the year than other Iowa streams.

Nate Hooegeven is an American Canoe Association certified instructor, author of the guidebook *Paddling Iowa*, and river programs coordinator for the Iowa DNR. For more information, contact Hooegeven at 515-281-3134.

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CELEBRATE EARTH DAY BY VOLUNTEERING AT A PRAIRIE RESCUE EVENT

Volunteers of all ages will help “rescue” prairie at 15 sites throughout Iowa during the month of April. This is an annual event coordinated by the Iowa DNR with support from Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in conjunction with county conservation boards, and private conservation groups.

For a complete listing of all Iowa Prairie Rescue sites, visit the Prairie Rescue website at <http://inhf.org/prairierescue2007.html>. Each event is listed and includes the location, site information, volunteer information and contact information. In case of rain or bad weather, call the specific rescue event contact to see if the rescue will still take place.

The events are also listed on the Iowa DNR Keepers of the Land events calendar at www.iowadnr.com/volunteer/index.html. Questions may be directed to Whitney Davis of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at 515-281-6271, or Whitney.Davis@dnr.state.ia.us.

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BOAT REGISTRATIONS DUE BY APRIL 30

DES MOINES – Boat and personal watercraft owners are required to renew the registration of their vessels by April 30. Boat registrations are now good for three years, which is new. The registrations had been good for two years.

Registration fees vary depending on the size of the vessel and are paid to the county recorder in the county where the owner resides. Failure to display current registration is a simple misdemeanor.

Iowa’s recreational boating activities continue to grow each year. Registration fees are used to support Iowa’s boating enforcement and safety program.

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BOATER EDUCATION COURSE AVAILABLE TO SEVENTH GRADERS

SPIRIT LAKE - The Iowa Great Lakes Water Safety Council is offering seventh graders a hands-on boating safety experience in June, and has a limited number of seats available. The program is scheduled from June 3 to 15, from 8 a.m. to noon, except on sailing day, it will conclude at 2 p.m. The program is open to seventh graders from Iowa.

The majority of the training will take place at Camp Foster with sailing at the Okoboji Yacht Club. Graduation will be June 21 at Gull Point State Park.

After completing the classroom, home study, or Internet Iowa Boater Education program, the seventh graders can apply for the Spirit of America program to learn about canoes, kayaks, outboard boats, sailboats, personal water craft and powerboats. Spirit of America participants will also gain experience with the Arnolds Park/Okoboji Fire Rescue Boat and the DNR Lake Patrol boats.

To participate in the free Spirit of America program, contact Jill Hultquist at Camp Foster, 712-336-3272 or DNR conservation officer Gary Owen at 712-260-1018.

For more information, including an application for the Spirit of America program, go to the Water Safety Council website, www.watersafetycouncil.org.

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PRICELESS POLLUTION TO BE UNVEILED

DES MOINES – River cleanup volunteers, along with officials from the Department of Natural Resources, will join together on April 20 to officially unveil a heaping pile of river pollution in the form of a sculpture.

The public is invited to enjoy refreshments and view the sculpture, given the name “Strongback,” from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the second floor atrium of the Wallace State Office Building, 502 E 9th Street, in Des Moines.

“Strongback,” representing the “shouldering” responsibility everyone shares toward the health and sustainability of our water resources, was created from a portion of the 348 cubic yards (66 ten wheel dump trucks) of trash. The trash was pulled from the Iowa and English rivers in 2006 by volunteers during the DNR’s annual Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition) river cleanup event. Ogden sculpture artist, David Williamson, along with patrons of the Iowa State and Johnston County fairs

completed the artistic process.

This year marks the third sculpture to be unveiled as part of Riverse, an artistic companion to Project AWARE. Along with “Strongback,” a poem created through the same collaborative effort entitled “Bearings” will also be unveiled.

“These sculptures, and the story of how they came to be, have brought about a powerful connection between Iowans and their water resources,” said Merry Rankin, program director for the DNR’s Keepers of the Land Volunteer Program. “Talking about how citizens can make a difference is one thing, involving them in being a part of that difference is another.”

Riverse will return for this summer’s annual Project AWARE event, which takes place June 16-23 on the Raccoon River. Visit www.iowaprojectaware.com for registration and other materials.

For more information on the sculpture unveiling or other water quality events and volunteer opportunities, contact Merry Rankin at (515) 281-0878 or at Merry.Rankin@dnr.state.ia.us.

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ANNUAL RIVER CLEANUP EVENT TARGETS RACCOON RIVER

DES MOINES – DNR officials are calling upon adventuresome volunteers to take part in the 5th annual Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition) river cleanup and water quality monitoring initiative.

This year’s river cleanup expedition will tackle 112 miles of both the Middle and North Raccoon rivers from June 16 – 23. Volunteers participate by floating the river by way of kayak or canoe and clean up river trash along the way. While the expedition lasts an entire week, volunteers may stay and help for as little or as long as they like.

Past participants have said that AWARE is one of the greatest ways for someone to not only make a connection with nature, but also to make a difference in protecting it. And a definite impact has been made.

In the four-year history of Project AWARE, the expedition has sported an impressive track record enlisting 610 volunteers across 282 river miles and in 4 different lakes with an area totaling 1,622 acres. Across this distance their efforts have yielded 670 cubic yards of trash, 85 percent of which was made recyclable.

While the work can be tough and dirty, the expedition is really one of a kind.

“Project AWARE is hands-down, one of the filthiest yet most personally-rewarding summertime activities in the Midwest,” said Merry Rankin, a four-year Project AWARE veteran.

Project AWARE is an initiative of the DNR’s IOWATER Program, a volunteer initiative dedicated to improving Iowa’s rivers and watersheds. The best-value registration deadline is June 1, after which an additional \$10 will be applied.

For more information on this year’s event and to download the registration materials, please visit www.iowaprojectaware.com or contact Brian Soenen at (515) 205-8587 or at Brian.Soenen@dnr.state.ia.us.

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CELEBRATE ARBOR MONTH IN IOWA

DES MOINES – April is a great time to plant new trees and shrubs to beautify the landscape, protect the soils and water and to provide critical habitat for wildlife. Iowa Governor Chet Culver has declared April as “Arbor Month” in Iowa “for the people of Iowa to pay special attention to the benefits of our trees and dedicate themselves to the planting and management of all of Iowa’s trees and forests.”

“We all can help celebrate Arbor Month by purchasing trees through our partnering efforts with Alliant Energy, MidAmerican Energy and others,” said John Walkowiak, forester with the Iowa DNR’s Forestry Bureau.

Operation Releaf is a program for residential tree planting in partnership with Alliant Energy available this spring in Story, Linn, Dallas, Lee, Marshall, Clinton, Jefferson and Dickinson counties in cooperation with local county conservation boards and RC&Ds, go to www.alliantenergy.com/operationreleaf for more information.

Plant Some Shade is a program for residential tree planting in partnership with MidAmerican Energy available this spring in Pottawattamie, Scott, Polk, Black Hawk, Woodbury, Mahaska and Warren counties in cooperation with local city departments, county conservation boards and RC&Ds, go to www.midamericanenergy.com/plantsomeshade for more information.

Conservation trees and shrubs are also available in specialty packets of 20 to 200 plants through the State Forest Nursery in Ames, by calling 1-800-865-2477 or go to www.iowatreeplanting.com for more information.

For more information, contact John Walkowiak at 515-242-5966 or john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us

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TREE HUGGERS RECEIVE ANNUAL RECOGNITION

DES MOINES – Outstanding individuals dedicated to statewide tree planting and conservation efforts were honored April 5 by officials with the Iowa Urban and Community Forestry Council (IUCFC).

Individuals from 142 Iowa communities came together in Des Moines to attend the Partnerships = A Thriving Urban Forest banquet and to be recognized for their service to various local tree planting efforts.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) director, Richard Leopold, was in attendance to express thanks and gratitude to Iowans statewide volunteer and professional urban foresters.

“I recognize and appreciate the long-term vision everyone here has for Iowa’s urban and community forestry future,” Leopold said. “You do not plant trees for yourself. You plant them for your children and your children’s children.”

Leopold also read a proclamation signed by Governor Chet Culver commemorating April as Arbor Month in Iowa.

Longevity was the buzzword for award winners when discussing why they contribute to state forestry efforts. Mike Jensen, president of Story City Trees Forever, says that it’s a love of nature that gets you interested, but it’s looking to the future that keeps you going.

“Somebody has done this for us and we’re just trying to give back,” Jensen said.

Winners of the 2007 Arbor Day poster contest were also announced at the event. Third place went to Sara Leininger of Waterloo, second place went to Clara Pearson of Farnhamville, and first place honors were given to Drake Mossman of Dysart, who will now advance to the national poster competition.

IUCFC awards were presented to groups and individuals in the following categories:

- Outstanding Volunteer Award: Mike O’Leary, Coralville
- Outstanding Professional Award: Kathy Calupa, Muscatine
- Outstanding Youth Project Award: H.T. Buie, Stratford
- Outstanding Community Organization Award: Durant Living Limbs
- Outstanding Community Organization Award: Story City Trees Forever
- Outstanding Local Partner Award: Pennock Landscaping, Clinton

Event sponsors including Aquila, Alliant Energy, MidAmerican Energy, Telephone Pioneers, Trees Forever and the Iowa Arborist Association were also recognized for their support and contribution.

The Iowa Urban and Community Forestry Council consists of statewide entities focused on increasing and maintaining Iowa's forestry resources. The council is comprised of 27 representatives from state and national organizations including the U.S. Forest Service, Iowa State University Extension Service, the Iowa DNR and Trees Forever. The council is dedicated to addressing such forestry issues as improvement and expansion of existing urban and community trees, diversifying tree composition and eradication of invasive species, as well as the expansion of forestry education and volunteer efforts within and among Iowa communities.

For more information, please contact Randy Cook at (515) 281-5600 or at Randy.Cook@dnr.state.ia.us.

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TREES AND SHRUBS FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT AVAILABLE THIS SPRING

AMES - Habitat created by trees and shrubs is critical to wildlife survival in Iowa. Though one tree gives some benefits, a diverse planting of trees and shrubs give the greatest benefit to the most wildlife.

In response to the call to expand wildlife habitat plantings, the State Forest Nursery, at Ames, is offering low cost Wildlife and Songbird packets of conservation trees and shrubs for citizens to plant this spring.

The Songbird Packet is ideal for an area in the yard to devote to wildlife. The Songbird Packet consists of two bur oaks, two white pine, four wild plum, four chokecherry, four gray dogwoods and four serviceberry plants. The bareroot seedlings are 8-to-24 inches tall. This Songbird Packet sells for \$20 and was developed in cooperation with Audubon Iowa.

The Create-Your-Own Wildlife Packet is for the landowner with 1-to-5 acres. This packet contains 200 trees and or shrubs of your choice for \$90. Trees and shrubs must be ordered in units of 50 plants.

In addition, a special Turkey Packet developed in cooperation with the Iowa Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation contains 50 bur oak, 50 red oak, 50 pin oak and 50 gray dogwood. A special Pheasant Packet developed in cooperation with Iowa Pheasants Forever contains 50 redcedar, 50 wild plum, 50 ninebark and 50 gray dogwood. Finally, a special Quail Packet containing 100 wild plum and 100 gray dogwoods is also available.

To order, contact the State Forest Nursery at 1-800-865-2477 or go on line to www.iowadnr.com/forestry/. The packets will be delivered from the middle of April through May with instructions and ready for planting.

For more information, contact John Walkowiak, forester with the Iowa DNR forestry bureau at 515-242-5966 or john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of April 13, 2007

www.iowadnr.gov

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Northwest

Many smaller lakes across northwest Iowa have re-frozen. Warmer weather forecasted later in the week should open those lakes again.

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching smallmouth bass using hair jigs and fishing the rock piles on the east side of the lake in 12 to 18 feet of water.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): A few bluegills and crappies are being caught in Triboji and in the canals using wax worms and small jigs.

Center Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching a few walleyes from shore, fishing in the evening.

Minnewashta (Dickinson): Anglers are catching a few walleyes from shore in the evening, throwing jigs.

Lower Gar (Dickinson): Anglers are catching catfish using cut bait.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Water temperatures are in the low 40s. Walleye fishing is slow. Wading or boat fishing Dodge's Point, the Island and the East shoreline areas are the best bet for walleye. A slow presentation with a jig and minnow is the best technique. Angling should improve with warming water temperatures.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Southwest

Icaria (Adams): Anglers are catching limits of 1.5 to 5 pound size catfish on cut bait at east end of the lake. Walleyes are being caught on jigs on the south side around marina and dam. The lake is about 9 inches away from being full.

Little River (Decatur): Anglers report catching walleyes off the points.

Wilson (Taylor): Crappie fishing has started. Use small jigs.

Windmill (Taylor): Anglers are catching crappies using small jigs.

Green Valley (Union): Channel catfish are being caught off silt dikes in the shallow ends.

Three Mile (Union): Anglers are catching walleyes on jigs.

Twelve Mile (Union): Walleyes up to 17 inches are being caught, but most are around 12 inches. Anglers are picking up largemouth bass up to 17 inches. The main boat ramp is useable.

Contact: Gary Sobotka (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.

The cold weather and the high winds have seemed to shut most of the fishing down in central Iowa. However, when the water temperature begins to rise have your gear ready.

Banner Lakes @ Sunset Park (Warren): Trout were stocked two weeks ago and should still be willing to bite.

Big Creek (Polk): Some walleyes and crappie were being caught before the cold front.

Below Saylorville dam (Polk): Some walleyes are being caught on white jigs tipped with minnows at Cottonwood Park.

Des Moines River (Polk): When the water temperature warms, try fishing below the low-head dams and riffles walleyes. Gravel bars can also produce this time of year.

Contact: Ben Dodd (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Anglers are catching walleyes and small crappies in canal and along south shore.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): The lake will open for fishing on April 15.

Farm Ponds: Farm ponds are beginning to warm and anglers should be able to pick up fish in area ponds. Be sure to ask permission from the landowner first, however.

Contact: Bryan Hayes (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19: Water temp at Muscatine is 42 degrees. All pools are at or near flood stage making access difficult. All areas are reporting slow fishing because of the high water and the drop in temperature. **Pool 16** crested just below flood stage and is predicted to slowly drop without additional precipitation. There are still a few white bass being taken in Sylvan Slough. **Pool 17** crested just below flood stage and is predicted to slowly drop without additional precipitation. **Pool 18** is just over flood stage and is predicted to rise slightly over the next couple of days. **Pool 19** is just under flood stage and predicted to slowly drop over the next few days.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Anglers were catching lots of nice catfish before it got cold last week. Look for the catfish to be biting again as it warms up. Shad and shad guts are the preferred baits.

Lake Darling (Washington): Anglers are picking up a few catfish along the rocky shorelines. Look for bass to be working the shallow bays on a warm sunny afternoon.

Lake Geode (Henry): Anglers were catching bluegills and bass on bobbers and worms before the cold front.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Anglers were catching nice crappies in shallow where the “old” pond drains into the lake on the north side. They were also catching some nice bass in the shallows as well as where the marsh empties into the lake. Of course, this was all before the recent cold front.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies have been biting in 10-to 15-feet of water in areas with submerged habitat. Channel catfish have been biting on shad sides and cut bait.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Channel catfish have been hitting on cut bait.

Skunk River (Washington and Henry): The river is high and muddy. Anglers are snagging carp and buffalo at Oakland Mills below the dam. They are also catching a few flatheads below the dam as the flatheads are feeding on the shad that are going over the dam with the high water.

Cedar River (Louisa): Some flooding is forecasted until later this week when the river should get down below flood stage.

Iowa River (Washington and Louisa): The river is at bank full with some flooding in low-lying areas. NOAA forecasts it to stay at or above flood stage the rest of the week. People are spearing carp and buffalo in the flooded ditches.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: The water temperature at Guttenberg is 40 degrees and the river has crested and is slowly dropping. River levels on Monday were 11.4 feet in Guttenberg, 14.6 feet in Dubuque and Bellevue is at 13.25 feet. Although the water levels are still high, clarity is generally good. High river levels have caused some minor flooding and launching problems at some locations; you may want to check ahead before traveling a great distance. Fishing continues to be spotty with the high water and colder weather, but some anglers are having success fishing mostly in the tailwater areas.

Walleye and sauger fishing in **Pools 9 to 15** has been slow to fair with the high water. Use three-way rigs or jigs tipped with either a twister tail or a minnow in the slack water areas near the dams for the best results.

Anglers are also catching perch and bluegills in the slack water areas near the dams using a piece of night crawler or small minnows suspended under a bobber in **Pools 9 to 12**.

Crappie fishing has been fair in the backwater areas and side channels in **Pools 12 to 15** on minnows suspended below a bobber or small tube jigs. With water temperature this low, presentations for any fish should be slow.

Cedar River (Bremer and Black Hawk): Water levels are going down and fishing success is improving. Anglers are having success catching channel catfish in the Waverly impoundment using dead minnows fished on the bottom. Walleye fishing is picking up using jig and twister combinations tipped with a minnow. In high, fast water, fish for walleyes below the dams and areas just off current breaks.

Cedar River (Mitchell and Floyd): Water levels are up, but the river is still fishable. Anglers are catching a few nice size walleye and northerns using ring worms, artificial plastics and minnows. Anglers are also catching good numbers of channel catfish ranging from 2 to 12 pounds on dead chubs.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): Walleye fishing is improving using jig and twister tail combinations tipped with a minnow. Fish below the dams or in current break areas as water levels are above normal.

Shell Rock River (Butler and Bremer): Water levels remain high and fishing is slow.

Turkey River (Clayton): Water levels are up. Sucker fishing is picking up south of Elkader.

Upper Iowa River (Winneshiek and Allamakee): Water levels are fluctuating and turbid with recent spring storms. White suckers are being caught below the lower dam.

Wapsipinicon River (Buchanan): Water levels are up and channel catfish are biting on night crawlers and dead minnows. Walleye fishing is good below dams and current break areas using jigs and twister tails tipped with a minnow.

Heritage Lake (Dubuque): Heritage, located on the north edge of Dubuque, will receive its final trout stocking on April 14.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Channel catfish are good to excellent using dead minnows fished on the bottom.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Water clarity is turbid. Fishing pressure has been low.

Lake Meyer (Winneshiek): Hungry catfish are looking for dead fish along the windswept side of the lake. Nice-sized largemouth bass are being caught on spinners and crankbaits. Crappie and bluegill fishing is slow.

North Prairie Lake (Black Hawk): North Prairie in Cedar Falls received the final early spring stocking of trout on March 31.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Small bluegills and a few perch are being caught on the lake.

Trout stream stockings have begun. Most trout stream stocking are announced and the dates of proposed stockings can be found on the Iowa DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov or by calling the trout stocking hotline at 563-927-5736. Many streams run high and *stained* after a spring rain, but quickly become fishable within a day or so. Anglers are using a variety of baits and lures from white crappie jigs to black jigs tipped with a plastic worm.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

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